

Spatial representations of future in Homeric Greek

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1. Introduction

Studies of time representation in Ancient Greek are traditionally based on the assumption that, since the very beginning of the Greek language, time was conceptualized according to the tripartite structure of past, present and future that is commonly found in modern Indo-European languages (Treu, 1968; Dunkel, 1983). However, a closer scrutiny of data taken from the earliest stage of Greek, namely Homeric Greek, shows that there are no traces of such a deictic division in both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. In fact, as I am going to show in the following sections, the only space-time metaphorical model used in Homeric Greek is the non-deictic temporal sequence, in which events are located in a one-dimensional timeline with a bipartite division. In such a space-time mapping, also known as Time-Reference-Point or Time-based model (see, among others, Evans, Green, 2006, p. 84), events that happened before other events are leading, namely they are represented as temporal entities located ahead or IN FRONT (πρόσω) of following entities, whereas events that happened after other events are represented as temporal entities located BEHIND or in back (πίσω) of preceding entities in the same timeline. This kind of temporal model does not make reference to a deictic concept of future or past, although it will be seen that it is possible that later events in the temporal sequence refer to future events relative to the present moment 'now'. In addition, I will argue that also when temporal events are seen by the prophet Calchas, who is endowed with peculiar visual and interpreting capacities, the observer's conceptual vantage point is imposed to the

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scene without coinciding with the ‘here and now’ of the speech time. In such a case, he turns out to be *in-tandem* aligned with the entities in the scene, so that later events of the Time-RP sequence (i.e. future events) are conceptualized as being in front (πρό) of earlier events (i.e. present events) of the same sequence. Spatial representations of the future in Homeric Greek were therefore closely related to a Time-RP mapping, in which a truly tense-related deictic structure was not formed yet.

In what follows the SPACE-TIME metaphor of the future will be investigated, based on the textual analysis of data taken from Homeric Greek. The major corpus resources used in this study include the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG, 2000) as digital corpus of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*¹. In the second section, the Time-RP cognitive model used in Homeric Greek is analyzed, pointing out the bipartite structure of the temporal sequence within a *field-based* frame of reference. Section 3 discusses the role played by the non-deictic observer in a Time-RP sequence. In particular, the polysemy inherent to the spatial preposition IN FRONT is examined from a cross-linguistic perspective, focusing on the difference between the two possible observer’s orientations relative to the sequence, namely the *in-front* and the *in-tandem* alignment. The uses of the spatial preposition πρό in the Homeric poems are then analyzed, in order to see how the spatial meaning could have evolved toward a temporal meaning related to a future event (3.1). In section 4 the classic passage of *Iliad* 1, 70 is discussed, arguing against the three-term temporal system assumed by the traditional interpretation, in which the temporal sequence would be divided in present, future and past. A different interpretation is proposed, according to which the temporal sequence still has a bipartite structure, in which the future is located IN FRONT of the present, due to the ego’s *in-tandem* alignment relative to temporal entities within the perspective-neutral field-based frame of reference. Further evidence for this opposite Time-RP mapping in which LATER IS IN FRONT, EARLIER IS BEHIND would also come from the role played by ‘positional terms’ such as τὰ τ’ἔόντα and τὰ τ’ἔσσόμενα. Moreover, the future is here represented with a hendiadys, made of both distant and near future events. Such a peculiar representation is shown both in ancient Indo-European languages, like Old Avestan, and in non-Indo-European languages.

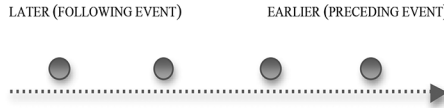
¹ Reference works include (but are not limited to) Schwyzler (1959), Chantraine (1953), Liddell, Scott, Jones (1996). Critical editions for *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are Mazon (1957-61), Monro, Allen (1978) and van Thiel (1991, 1996). Reference translation is Murray (1946).

2. Mapping the future in the temporal sequence (Time-RP mapping)

The world's languages express time in terms of conceptual metaphor from the source spatial domain to the target temporal domain. As mentioned in the introduction, in the Time-based or Time-RP model, time is conceptualized in terms of sequentially arrayed objects moving in space, so that a temporal event is relative to another earlier or later temporal event with which is *in-tandem* aligned (FIG. 1).

FIGURE 1

The time-RP model (temporal sequence) with an in-tandem alignment



Differently, the Ego-based (Ego-Reference-Point) model is considered to have a more complex structure, in which times are conceptualized as objects relative to a canonical deictic observer (Ego) located at the *hic et nunc* time of speech (Evans, Green, 2006, p. 84; Núñez, Sweetser, 2006), so that the future is represented as being in front of her/him. It is traditionally thought that both models coexist not only in modern, but also in ancient Indo-European languages (Dunkel, 1983).

However, focusing on Ancient Greek, it should be noted that such a coexistence is observable only from the classic age on. In fact, at the early stage, namely in Homeric Greek, examples of truly tense-related Ego-RP metaphors cannot be found.

Let us examine first those passages expressing Time-RP metaphors, i.e. temporal sequences. In (1) the formulaic expression *πρόσσω και ὀπίσσω* ‘ahead and behind’ is an example of space-time metaphor, in which spatial directional adverbs are interpreted temporally, referring to events that are related to each other in a consequential way.

- (1) [...] ἦ γὰρ ὃ γ' ὀλοῖησι φρεσὶ θύει,
 [...] certainly indeed he PRT destructive-DAT.PL mind-DAT.PL rage-PRES.3SG
 οὐδέ τι οἶδε νοῆσαι ἅμα **πρόσσω** καὶ **ὀπίσσω**,
 NEG ADV know-PF.3SG consider-INF both **ahead-ADV** and **behind-ADV**
 ὅπως οἱ παρὰ νηυσὶ σοοὶ μαχέιντο Ἀχαιοί.
 how him beside ship-DAT.PL safe-NOM.PL fight-OPT.3PL Achaean-NOM.PL

‘he rages with destructive mind, and is not able at all to consider both before and after, how his Achaeans might fight safe beside their ships’.
(*Il.* 1.342-344)

In this passage, taken from the *Iliad*, Achilles is talking to the heralds Talthybius and Eurybates, who have been sent by Agamemnon for the beautiful slave Briseis. Achilles, who is annoyed by Agamemnon’s arrogant behavior, reproaches him mostly for not being able to relate events to each other. And indeed, Agamemnon does not consider that depriving Achilles of his own slave (i.e. the preceding event) will cause, as a consequence, the defeat of Achaeans (i.e. the following event). The spatial adverbs *πρόσω* ‘in front, ahead’ and *ὀπίσω* ‘back, behind’ are temporally interpreted as ‘before and after’ in a sequential relationship with a bipartite structure. Such a structure is considered an example of temporal sequence or ‘objective time’ (Dunkel, 1983, p. 68), which does not refer to a ‘subjective’ deictic Ego, i.e. to a tense-related front-past *vs.* back-future connection.

Similar examples could be included, like *Il.* 18.249-250; 3.109; *Od.* 24.452. What is interesting to note is that the spatial adverb *ὀπίσω* ‘back, behind’ is temporally used to mean a following event within a non-deictic Time-RP model also when the related event in the sequence is represented by the present moment ‘now’, as can be seen in (2). Time is again imagined as a metaphorical space without reference to a tripartite division, such as is found in modern Indo-European languages.

- (2) *νῦν* δ’ ἐμὲ μὲν μέγα κῦδος ἀφείλεο, τοὺς δὲ σώωσας
 now PRT me PRT great-ACC glory-ACC.SG deprive-AOR.2SG the PRT save-AOR.2SG
ῥῆϊδίως, ἐπεὶ οὐ τι τίσιν γ’ ἔδεισας ὀπίσω.
 easily-ADV as NEG ADV vengeance-ACC.SG PRT fear-AOR.2SG behind-ADV
 ‘now you deprived me of a great glory, whereas you saved them easily,
 since you did not fear any vengeance after that’. (*Il.* 22.18-19)

In (2) Achilles is addressing Apollo in front of Ilios, remarking that he could easily rob him of his glory and save the Trojans because, being an immortal god, he has no fear of the future consequences of those bad actions. This passage makes clear the causal relationship between two different moments in time, i.e. now and after, that are located in a non-deictic temporal sequence in which BEHIND does not refer to ego’s body.

Similar considerations can be made for the formulaic expression found in *Odyssey* (3).

- (3) “χαῖρε, πάτερ ὦ ξένε· γένοιτό τοι ἔς περ ὀπίσω
 hail-IMP father-VOC o stranger-VOC be-OPT.3SG you-DAT.SG to PRT behind-ADV

ὄλβος· ἀτὰρ μὲν νῦν γε κακοῖσ' ἔχειαι πολέεσσι.”
 happiness-NOM CONJ PRT **now** PRT ill-DAT.PL hold-PRES.MID.2SG many-DAT.PL
 ‘Hail, father guest: may happiness be yours even in the aftertime;
 now in fact you are kept by many sorrows’. (Od. 18.122-123 = 20.199-200)

In (3) Amphinomus is addressing Odysseus, wishing him happiness for the time to come, following the bad situation in the present by which the hero is afflicted. This formula is again an example of bipartite mapping, in which a later following time is related to the earlier present time, without a deictic tense-related metaphor. The deictic reference to the present moment is indeed compatible with a temporal sequence without necessarily involving an *ego-perspective* frame of reference, which is proper to an Ego-RP mapping (Moore, 2011). The Time-RP mapping has in fact a *field-based* frame of reference, as also evidenced in Homeric Greek by the close association of FRONT and BEHIND terms with respectively right and left directions². Moreover, an absolute spatial *field-based* frame of reference (Evans, Green, 2006, p. 90) has been hypothesized due to the fact that Homeric Greek FRONT and BEHIND terms are also associated with the cardinal points, respectively east and west (Bartolotta submitted). The mere sequential, i.e. non-deictic nature of space-time mappings with a bipartite structure in Homeric Greek will be further examined in the next sections.

3. Uses of the spatial preposition ‘in front’ in a Time-RP model

The examples examined in section 2 show a temporal mapping with a bipartite structure, in which two events are related to each other in a sequence with a deictically neutral *field-based* frame of reference. The spatial adverbs πρόσσω ‘in front’ and ὀπίσσω ‘behind’ are in fact found in the Homeric poems with reference to a bipartite division also at a spatial level, as illustrated in (4).

- (4) [...] μή τις ὀπίσσω (Il. 12. 272-274)
 [...] NEG anyone-NOM.SG **back**-ADV
 τετράφθω ποτὶ νῆας ὁμοκλητῆρος ἀκούσας,
 turn-IMP.3SG to ship-ACC.PL shouter-GEN.SG hear-PRTC.NOM.SG
 ἀλλὰ πρόσσω ἴεσθε καὶ ἀλλήλοισι κέλεσθε,

² A more detailed discussion on this topic in Bartolotta (submitted). See Casanto, Jasmin (2012, p. 655) on the relationship between lateral left-right axis and non-deictic sequence metaphors.

but **ahead**-ADV go-IMP.2PL and each-other-DAT.PL exhort-IMP.2PL
 ‘Let no one go back to the ships after having heard the shouter,
 but you go ahead and exhort one another’.

What is now interesting to note is that the spatial representation of time that conventionally separates the past, the present and the future in a three-term system of temporal adverbs or spatial expressions never appears in Homeric Greek. Such a tripartite representation has however been used to interpret the classic passage of *Iliad* 1, 70 in (5).

- (5) ὃς ἦδη τὰ τ' ἐόντα τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα **πρό** τ' ἐόντα
 ‘who knew the things that were, and that were to be, and that had been
before’ (Murray, 1946).

This well-known passage refers to the prophet Calchas, “who knew the present, the past and the future” (see Treu, 1968, p. 123). The sentence in (5) has been interpreted sometimes as an Ego-RP metaphor following the Homeric scholia, sometimes as a Time-RP sequence (Dunkel, 1983, p. 66). In both cases, the expression **πρό** τ' ἐόντα ‘that are ahead’ would be referred to earlier preceding (past) events. These are indeed located ahead or in front of present events in an objective temporal sequence. However, if (5) is analyzed more carefully, the emerging picture is not entirely clear. What I am going to argue in this section is that this passage may not be, as previously thought, an instance of the spatio-temporal mapping expressing the tripartite division of present, past, and future. Rather, it could be more appropriately considered as a special case of Time-RP model. Before analyzing such a proposal, some remarks on the uses of the spatial preposition ‘in front (of)’ are necessary.

In the reconstruction of the meaning of the IE preposition **pro*, from which both Gr. **πρό** and **πρόσσω** derive, a discrepancy emerges when comparing Greek with other Indo-European languages. It suffices to mention, for example, Gr. **πρόγονοι** ‘progenitor, ancestor’ vs. Lat. *progenies* ‘offspring, progeny, descendants’³. In addition, **πρόσσω** ‘in front, ahead’ could indicate either an earlier or a later event, in Homeric and in Classical Greek respectively (Dunkel, 1968, p. 68). This apparent discrepancy is to be ascribed to the so-called ‘bisemic’ nature of prepositions such as ‘ahead, in front’ and ‘behind, in back’ (Vandeloise, 1991, p. 122), whose ambiguity depends on two possible viewpoints from which the spatial scene is

³ The hypothesis of a relationship between the passive meaning of the apophonic root variant *yov-* ‘born’ and the past meaning ‘before’ is discussed in Anderson (1988, p. 69).

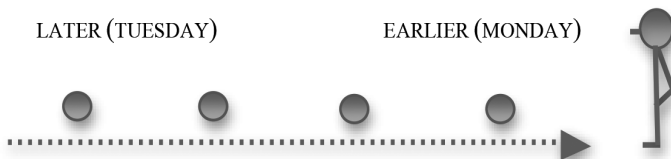
described by the speaker. For example, in FIG. 2 one could say that the apple is in FRONT of the tree, or that the apple is BEHIND the tree.

FIGURE 2
Bisemy of the spatial preposition ‘in front’



Such a polysemy inherent to the spatial meaning of the preposition is also reflected in the temporal representation. FRONT and BEHIND terms are in fact used in contrasting ways in different languages, but also within the same language (Hill, 1978, p. 525). Actually, both meanings used to describe the scene in FIG. 2 can be related to a Time-RP model, in which it is the alignment of the non-deictic conceptualiser that is responsible for different descriptions of the same temporal events (Evans, 2003, p. 229; Dewell, 2007, p. 292). As has been noted, a non-deictic conceptual perspective is in fact a necessary part of any spatial or temporal construal, including the temporal sequence (Time-RP construal), because it crucially determines the directionality built into the spatio-temporal domain. Specifically, this non-deictic conceptualizer can be alternatively *in-front* (see FIG. 3) or *in-tandem* aligned (see FIG. 4) relative to the sequenced temporal events.

FIGURE 3
Non-deictic conceptualiser with in-front alignment



For example, in modern Indo-European languages, like English or Italian, ‘Monday is/comes before Tuesday’, i.e. it is located in front of Tuesday, and ‘Tuesday is/comes after Monday’, i.e. it is located behind Monday in the imaginary timeline, according to the schema in FIG. 3. The arrow indicates the direction toward which temporal events (i.e. the little circles) move in-tandem aligned.

As FIG. 3 illustrates, a non-deictic observer is oriented with an in-front alignment relative to the in-tandemly sequenced temporal entities (Evans, 2003, p. 234). As a consequence, the earlier event closest to her/him, i.e. Monday, is located in front or before the later event, i.e. Tuesday.

Differently, in some modern non-Indo-European languages, like African Hausa, speakers make use of an in-tandem alignment of the non-deictic observer in processing static temporal relations lacking an inherent front/back asymmetry, so that ‘Tuesday’ is said to be ‘in FRONT of/ before Monday’ (see Hill, 1978, p. 528 for discussion), according to the schema illustrated in FIG. 4 (Evans, 2003, p. 233).

FIGURE 4
Non-deictic conceptualiser with in-tandem alignment



As can be seen in the two schemas above (FIGG. 3-4), the difference between the two non-deictic perspectives lies not only in the conceptualiser’s alignment relative to temporal entities, but also in the spatial configuration of the scene, which can be static or involving motion (Evans, 2003, p. 231). Thus, while in English the temporal construal can also be elaborated in terms of motion (e.g. ‘Monday *comes* before/*precedes* Tuesday’), in Hausa the temporal sequence is seen as a static relationship among entities, whose in-tandem alignment is imposed by the in-tandem orientation of the non-deictic experiencer. As a consequence, the more distant entity relative to the observer, i.e. the later event (e.g. Tuesday), is located ‘in front of’ the nearer one (Monday), which, in turn, is said to be ‘behind’ Tuesday.

3.1. Homeric Greek *πρό* in a Time-RP model

Now, turning to Homeric Greek, let us analyze meanings and uses of the preposition *πρό*. First of all, it is worth noting that only the expression *ἦῶθι πρό*, commonly translated as ‘before dawn’ (3 out of 74 occurrences of *πρό* in the Homeric poems), where *πρό* is used as an adverb, could have developed a temporal meaning⁴. Also, the only reference to the past is ascribed to *πρό* used as a preverb in *τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι* (3x), commonly translated as ‘the things made before’ (*Il.* 16.60; 18.112; 19.65). In fact, *πρό* usually has a spatial meaning⁵, as can be seen in (6), in which a spatial sequence of Greek heroes is described during the battle against the Trojans.

- (6) ἦρχ’ υἱὸς Πετewο Μενεσθεύς, οἱ δ’ ἅμ’ ἔποντο
 lead-IMPF.3SG son-NOM Peteos-GEN Menestheus him PRT together follow-IMPF.3PL
 Φειδας τε Στιχιος τε Βιας τ’ εὗς αὐτὰρ Ἐπειῶν
 Pheidias-NOMand Stichius-NOM and Bias-NOM and brave-NOM CONJ Epeian-GEN.PL
 Φυλεΐδης τε Μέγης Ἀμφίων τε Δρακίος τε,
 son.of.Phyleus-NOM and Meges-NOM Amphion-NOM and Dracius-NOM and
πρό Φθίων δὲ Μέδων τε μενεπτόλεμός τε Ποδάρκης.
ahead-ADV Phthian-GEN.PL PRT Medon-NOM and steadfast-NOM and Podarces-NOM
 ‘[...] Menestheus, the son of Peteos, was leader, and there followed him
 Pheidias and Stichius and Bias the brave; besides, Meges son of Phyleus
 and Amphion and Dracius of the Epeians, in front of the Phthians Medon
 and the steadfast Podarces’.
 (*Il.* 13.690-693)

As a preposition, *πρό* governs the genitive, as illustrated in (6), where Medon and Podarces lead the Phthians, being located in front of them in the sequence.

Interestingly enough, the spatial meaning of expressions like *πρό ὁδοῦ* ‘ahead on the way’ in (7) implies an observer’s *in-tandem* alignment. In fact, the farther space on the way is seen as located

⁴ Actually, *ἦῶθι πρό* might have a temporal meaning only in *Od.* 6, 36, whereas it might have preserved its original spatial meaning in *Il.* 11, 50 and *Od.* 5, 469. The expression *πρό γάμοιο* (2x) ‘instead of wedding’ in *Od.* 15, 524; 17, 476 has not a temporal meaning (*pace* Dunkel, 1983, p. 73), as the comparison with both the interchangeable expression (in similar contexts) *ἀντὶ γάμοιο* in *Od.* 20, 307 and the use of *τέλος γάμοιο* in *Od.* 20, 74 makes clear.

⁵ Similar considerations with regards to the meaning and uses of Latin *pro* are found in Bettini (1986, p. 172).

‘ahead’ or ‘in front’ of the space that is closer to the observer (see also Luraghi, 2003, p. 156).

- (7) οἱ δ’ ἐπεὶ οὖν ὄχοντο ἰδὲ **πρὸ** ὁδοῦ ἐγένοντο,
 they PRT after then go-IMPF.3PL and **ahead**-ADV way-GEN.SG be-IMPF.3PL
 ‘then, after they were departed and were ahead on the way’ (Il. 4, 382)

Also, *πρό* is sometimes used as an adverb or as a preverb. For example, it is found as an adverb in (8), again in a spatial sequence.

- (8) κύματα παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
 wave-NOM.PL boil-PRTC.NOM.PL loud-roaring-GEN.SG sea-GEN.SG
 κυρτὰ φαληριόωντα, **πρὸ** μὲν τ’ ἄλλ’, αὐτὰρ ἐπ’ ἄλλα
 swelling-PL whitened-PL in front-ADV PRT and other-NOM.PL PRT after other-NOM.PL
 ὧς Τρῶες **πρὸ** μὲν ἄλλοι ἀρηρότες, αὐτὰρ ἐπ’ ἄλλι,
 so Trojan-NOM.PL **ahead**-ADV PRT other-NOM.PL joined-NOM PRT after other-NOM.PL
 χαλκῷ μαρμαίροντες ἅμ’ ἡγεμόνεσσιν ἕποντο.
 bronze-DAT.SG flash-PRTC.NOM.PL together leader-DAT.PL follow-IMPF.3PL
 ‘[...] the boiling waves of the loud-roaring sea, swelling and white with foam, some in front and others behind: so Trojans, in close order, some in front and others behind, flashing with bronze, followed together with their leaders’.
 (Il. 13, 799-801)

The simile in (8) compares the Trojan soldiers with the waves of the sea, which move in a sequence, being joined closely together, one in front of the other. What is important to note is that, similarly to what has been seen in the preceding section with reference to the spatial representations of the future in Homeric Greek, the use of *πρό* always refers to a bipartite division of the spatial scene, indicating what is in front relatively to what is behind.

Also when used as a preverb, both incorporated or separated from the verb (tmesis), the preposition *πρό* refers to a space located ‘ahead’ or ‘in front’, as for example *προβάλλω* ‘throw, put forwards’ (Il. 1. 458), *προφέρω* ‘bring forwards’ (Il. 9. 323), *προπέμπω* ‘send forwards’ (Il. 1. 442), *προφεύγω* ‘flee forwards’ (Il. 9. 340). In this respect, it is worth analyzing some examples with *προφαίνω* ‘show forth, appear, come forward’, which occur four times in the Odyssey.

- (9) τοῖσιν δ’ αὐτίκ’ ἔπειτα θεοὶ τέραα **προῦφαινον**
 they-DAT.PL PRT forthwith then god-NOM.PL sign-ACC.PL show-IMPF.3PL
 ‘then suddenly the gods showed signs to them’.
 (Od. 12.394)

- (10) ἄηρ γὰρ περὶ νηυσὶ βαθεῖ ἦν, οὐδὲ σελήνη
 air-NOM.SG for around ship-DAT.PL deep-NOM.SG be-IMPF.3SG nor moon-NOM.SG
 οὐρανόθεν προὔφαινε, κατείχετο δὲ νεφέεσσιν.
 from heaven-ADV show-IMPF.3SG hold-IMPF.MID.3SG but cloud-DAT.PL
 ‘there was a deep mist around the ships, and the moon did not appear
 from heaven, but was held by clouds’ (Od. 9.144-145)

In both (9) and (10) προφαίνω means ‘to appear, become visible; show’, i.e. to be in front of one’s eyes. If something happens right in front of you, it happens in a very open and visible way, so that you can see it very clearly. And indeed, in (10) the moon cannot be visible because the clouds prevent everyone from clearly seeing it. The relationship between προφαίνω and the eyesight is confirmed by what is found in the immediately preceding verse quoted in (11), where the verb ιδέσθαι ‘to see’ is used.

- (11) [...] καὶ τις θεὸς ἡγεμόνευε
 [...] and some-NOM.SG god-NOM.SG lead-IMPF.3SG
 νύκτα δι’ ὄρφναίνην, οὐδὲ προὔφαινετ’ ιδέσθαι
 night-ACC.SG through dark-ACC.SG NEG show-IMPF.MID.3SG see-INF
 ‘[...] some god led the way through the dark night,
 nothing could be seen in front’ (Od. 9.142-143)

Interestingly enough, the ability to perceive what appears in front of one’s eyes is also expressed by the compounded verb προνοέω, where πρό’s spatial meaning tends to gradually develop a temporal meaning. Let us examine an example taken from the Iliad in (12).

- (12) οἱ δὲ τάχα προγένοντο, δύω δ’ ἄμ’ ἔποντο νομῆες
 they PRT quickly come-in-sight-IMPF.3PL two PRT together follow-IMPF.3PL herdsmen
 τερπόμενοι σύριγγι δόλον δ’ οὐ τι προνόησαν.
 enjoy-PRTC-NOM.PL syrinx-DAT.SG trick-ACC.SG PRT NEG ADV foresee-AOR.3PL
 ‘forthwith they came in sight, and two herdsmen followed together
 enjoying the syrinx; they did not see any trick in front’ (Il. 18.525-526)

It is noteworthy that not only in προγίγνομαι ‘come in front or in sight’ πρό basically preserves its spatial meaning ‘in front’ without referring to a past temporal meaning, but also the verb νοέω can refer to a perception that takes place ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ‘through the eyes’, as evidenced in *Il.* 15, 422; 24, 294; 312. Thus, the combination of this verb with spatial πρό ‘in front’ in (12) expresses the herdsmen’s

ability to see what was happening in the space in front of them. And indeed, while playing the syrinx, they did not notice the ambush that had been set for them by enemy warriors near the river, exactly there where they were approaching (see the spatial scene's description in the preceding verses 513-524). Starting from this spatial meaning, *πρὸς* might have developed a metaphorical relationship with the temporal prediction of upcoming events in the visual field.

4. The Future in front of the prophet's sight

After having briefly examined the uses of $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, we are now in a better position to understand the passage of *Iliad* 1.70 presented in (5) and resumed here as (13).

- (13) ὃς ἥδη τὰ τ' ὄντα
 who-NOM.SG see-in-the-mind-PPF.3SG the-ACC.PL and be-PRTC.PRES.ACC.PL
 τὰ τ' ἐσσόμενα **πρό** τ' ὄντα
 the-ACC.PL and be-PRTC.FUT.ACC.PL in front and be-PRTC.PRES.ACC.PL
 '[Calchas] who *saw in his mind* the things that are, the things that will be
 and that are in front'

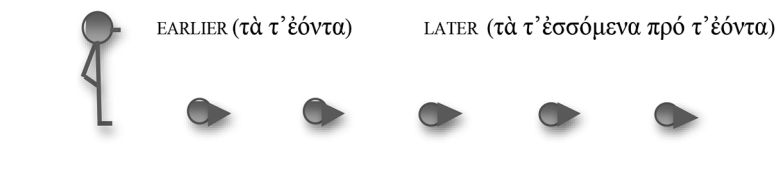
The traditional interpretation seen in (5), which assumes a three-term temporal system, shows some inconsistencies. First, the temporal construal would have an unclear sequential order of present, future and past. Second, from a linguistic perspective, the definite article τὰ ‘the’ (n. pl.) precedes the first two members of the suggested triple partition, i.e. τὰ τ’ἐόντα ‘the present (viz. things that are)’ and τὰ τ’ἐσόμενα ‘the future (viz. things that will be)’, but not the third one, πρὸ τ’ἐόντα ‘that are in front’, traditionally interpreted as ‘the past’.

With regard to the first point, it is worth remarking that, according to Burckhardt (2014, p. 211), in the ancient Indo-European languages the mantic art, addressing specifically the future, was distinguished from the memory, addressing specifically the past. Thus, not only the temporal (Time-RP) sequence is not compatible with the order ‘present, future, past’, but also divination was mainly focused on the future rather than the past. Based on both the bipartite structure proper to the temporal sequences found in Homeric Greek, and on the linguistic properties of the definite article τὰ, which determines the members of the sequence, the hypothesis put forth here proposes that the temporal sequence in (13) is made of a bipartite structure as well, similarly to what has been previously pointed out in Belardi

(1950, p. 55). However, differently from the latter, the expression $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ $\tau'\acute{\epsilon}\acute{o}\nu\tau\alpha$ 'that are in front' would not refer to the past, but specify the second element of the sequence, i.e. $\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\tau'\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\sigma\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ 'the future things'. More precisely, being preceded by one and the same definite article $\tau\grave{\alpha}$ and being linked by the conjunction $\tau\epsilon$, $\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\tau'\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\sigma\acute{o}\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ and $\pi\rho\acute{o}$ $\tau'\acute{\epsilon}\acute{o}\nu\tau\alpha$ would form one hendiadys expressing the future as a complex concept, involving 'the things that will be and that are located in front (of the present)' in an imaginary one-dimensional timeline. The space-time mapping in (13) could represent an example of Time-RP model in which a non-deictic observer, i.e. the prophet Calchas, through his visual capacities (expressed by the verb $\omicron\iota\delta\alpha$ 'have seen with the mind's eye'),⁶ imposes his orientation to temporal entities. He is in-tandem aligned with these, which are still related to each other in the static scene with a deictically neutral *field-based* frame of reference. In such a Time-RP construal, future events are conceptualized as being in front of earlier events of the same sequence (FIG. 5).

FIGURE 5

Non-deictic conceptualiser with in-tandem alignment



As seen for Hausa (in section 3), the schema in FIG. 5 represents the future as the farther event, statically seen in front ($\pi\rho\acute{o}$) of the present ($\tau\grave{\alpha}$ $\tau'\acute{\epsilon}\acute{o}\nu\tau\alpha$). In this metaphorical mapping the prophet is able to see farther things, whose view is usually obstructed by things that are closer to the observer.

The complex hendiadic representation of the future found in *Il.* 1.70 would not be new. Not only it derives from a psychological reality that is supported by cognitive psychology studies, but is also attested

⁶ The visual perception proper to Homeric Greek and Vedic prophets was the result of a peculiar ability to mentally see and perceive (starting from the visual experience) things that have not taken place yet, thus interpreting both present and future events (further details in Bartolotta, 2012).

in both ancient IE languages and modern non-IE languages. On the one hand, as recently remarked (Evans, 2003, p. 187), what emerges from cognitive psychology studies is that future time perspective is related to the ‘present anticipation of future goals’, i.e. it is a function of the present. This reminds us of the ability to see or perceive in anticipation what is going to happen right in front of the observer space, as illustrated in sentences like (11) or (12), in which *πρό* refers to the observer’s ability to see the space located just in front of him, thus anticipating what is occurring at a time immediately ‘in front of’ the present. In such a case, *πρό* ‘in front’ does not refer to a past event, as traditionally thought with reference to *Il.* 1.70, but to a forthcoming event.

On the other hand, a similar representation of the future is found in other ancient IE languages, such as Old Iranian (Avestan), as is shown in (14).

- (14) *tā* *θβā* *pərəsā* *ahurā*
these-ACC.PL you-ACC.SG ask-PRES.1SG Ahura-VOC.SG

yā *zī* *āitī* *jəŋghati* *cā* (*Yasna* 31, 14)
which-NOM.PL PRT go.to-PRES.3SG come-SUBJ.3SG and
‘I ask You, o Ahura, about the things which are approaching and will
come’ (Dahl, 2011, p. 270)

As can be seen in the passage above, taken from the most ancient *Gathas*, the prayer is asking the god Ahura Mazda about the future events. These are referred to with a hendyadys, made of two verbs linked by the conjunction *cā* ‘and’. The first of the two verbs is an indicative present from Av. *ay-/i* < PIE **H₁ei-* ‘to go’ (Rix, 2001, p. 232) compounded with the deictic particle *ā*, which indicates spatial proximity and/or reach. The second verb is a subjunctive aorist from *jən* ‘to come’ < PIE **g^wem-* ‘to go; come’ (Rix, 2001, p. 209). These verbs are here used together to indicate the future, namely a complex concept made of both the things that are approaching to the space near the observer, i.e. things that are imminent, and the things that will come in the uncertain future.

From a typological perspective, the distinction between imminent and future is frequently found in the world’s languages, as has been shown, for example, for Malagasy (Dahl, 1995, p. 199), or Vietnamese (Radden, 2011, p. 24). In some African languages spoken in Algerian rural communities, like Tamazight, the imminent or experienced forthcoming is conceived as a necessary extension of the perceived present, whereas the future or ‘time-to-come’ does not fall within its

scope (Bourdieu, 1963, p. 61; Cardona, 1985, p. 72). Similarly, in the Old Iranian example in (14) the present tense, combined with a spatial particle indicating proximity, is used for the imminent, whereas the subjunctive aorist is used for the future. Likewise, in the Homeric Greek passage seen in (13) the imminent is expressed by the present tense combined with *πρό* ‘in front, ahead of’, whereas the invisible, unknown future by the future tense. The contiguity between present and imminent in the space-to-time mapping has also be seen, for example, in some Micronesian languages, in which the same spatial demonstrative is used as time word to indicate either the present or the future, whereas a different demonstrative is used to indicate the past (Anderson, Keenan, 1985, p. 299).

The hypothesis put forth here for Homeric Greek is consistent with the conceptual mapping between spatial IN-FRONT and temporal LATER concepts. In particular, contrarily to the cross-linguistic tendency described in section 2, according to which EARLIER IS IN FRONT, LATER IS BEHIND, the Time-RP model, also called SEQUENCE AS POSITION metaphor, exhibits the opposite mapping LATER IS IN FRONT, EARLIER IS BEHIND when a particular kind of temporal terms is involved. These have been called ‘positional terms’, i.e. named members of repeating sequences, such as, for example, seasons or months, specific events of the year, events that repeat cyclically, etc. (Fillmore, 1971, p. 47; Shinoara, Pardeshi, 2011, p. 751). Such a metaphor has been increasingly studied in many languages (Moore, 2000; Shinoara, Pardeshi, 2011). It cannot be excluded that also Homeric Greek *τὰ τ'έόντα* and *τὰ τ'έσσόμενα*, which specifically indicate ‘present’ and ‘future’, were used as named members of repeating sequence, as they continued to be used with this specific meaning also after Homer (see authors of the archaic period, such as Hesiod, *Th.*, v. 30, and Pindar, *Ol.* XIII, 103; *Paian.* 52i, 83). In this regard, it may prove quite revealing that while *τὰ τ'έόντα* and *τὰ τ'έσσόμενα* indicate respectively ‘present’ and ‘future’ in both Homer and Pindar, the latter refers to ‘the past’ with *πρόσθεν γεγενημένα* ‘(things) happened before’ (Pind., *Paian.* 52i, 84) and not of with *πρό τ'έόντα*.

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